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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [RP](#) [EU](#) [UNMIK](#) [YI](#)  
SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES MOVING CAUTIOUSLY ON KOSOVO  
INDEPENDENCE

REF: A. STATE 16319

- [1](#)B. MANILA 386
- [1](#)C. STATE 14626
- [1](#)D. STATE 13716

Classified By: Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In a February 18 discussion, the Ambassador again directly engaged Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo on the issue of Kosovo independence, stressing the U.S position that early recognition of Kosovo by as many nations as possible offered the best hope for stability and peace in the Balkans region, as well as continued consolidation of democratic institutions. She encouraged the Philippines to recognize Kosovo quickly and noted the countries that had already taken that step.

[1](#)2. (C) Foreign Secretary Romulo was again well informed on the details of Kosovo and said he had been touched by television coverage of the Kosovars' euphoria over independence and their appreciation for the nations that had moved them toward independence and recognized the fledgling state. However, he said it was very difficult to see a way for Manila to promptly recognize Kosovo or come out with a statement that leaned too far in that direction at this moment. He explained that his government's negotiations with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) insurgents in the southern province of Mindanao were at a very sensitive stage in which this very issue of independence was being addressed. Taking either step now would cause the government trouble in its negotiations with the MILF.

[1](#)3. (C) The Foreign Secretary then put out a cautious public statement February 18 that said the Philippines "did not oppose" the idea of Kosovo independence, but believed that a lasting solution should be based on a negotiated solution acceptable to both sides. Full text of the statement follows in para. 4.

[1](#)4. (U) Text of Foreign Secretary Romulo's statement on Kosovo's declaration of independence:

While the Philippines does not oppose the idea of Independence of Kosovo, it would prefer a settlement of the issue as embodied within both parties' obligation under UN Security Council Resolution 1244, taking into account the internationally accepted principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Philippines believes that a lasting solution, including that of independence, should be based on a negotiated solution mutually acceptable to all parties. Considering the existing sensibilities in the region, continued dialogue should be encouraged among all the parties concerned to

ensure regional stability.  
KENNEY